



EAST AFRICA

COMBATTING WILDLIFE CRIME

As demand for products like elephant ivory and rhino horn continues to rise and poaching methods become increasingly sophisticated, wildlife crime threatens the security, economy, and biodiversity of East Africa. International networks for poaching, transit, and sale of illegal wildlife products target wildlife populations across borders, creating a complex problem that transcends national boundaries. East Africa's tourism industry depends heavily on wildlife and protected areas and brings over \$6 billion to the region each year; roughly \$1.6 billion to Kenya alone. The conservation and sustainable management of wildlife and habitats are crucial to the region's long-term economic growth and development. Reducing or eliminating illegal wildlife crime also contributes to supporting stronger cross-border security, stability, and resilience in the region. In line with the U.S. National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking and the U.S. Eliminate, Neutralize and Disrupt Wildlife Trafficking Act, USAID is taking urgent action to enhance wildlife management and the enforcement and prosecution of wildlife crime in East Africa.

ACTIVITY AREAS

LANDSCAPE-LEVEL PROTECTION & ENFORCEMENT

The community conservancy approach to conservation is now widely recognized ~ the best solution for managing wildlife outside protected areas in Kenya. Local communities create governance structures and benefit sharing agreements that ensure everyone has a stake in protecting wildlife, preventing trafficking, and reducing conflict and insecurity. In 2004, USAID helped pioneer the community conservancy model in Kenya through its work with the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and the Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT). In 2016, USAID scaled up its work with NRT to expand and strengthen community conservancies across Kenya. NRT's highly sophisticated anti-poaching network works closely with KWS and the Kenyan police to achieve results: only 4 elephants were poached for their ivory in 2019 compared to 103 in 2012. This is a 96 percent reduction across more than 39 participating conservancies in northern Kenya. USAID also works with 15 community conservancies in the Maasai Mara, where it has supported the doubling of land under conservation, in partnership with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Maasai Mara Wildlife Conservancies Association.

TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE ENFORCEMENT AND PROSECUTION

Working in partnership with the relevant wildlife and enforcement authorities, USAID supports innovative, new technologies and methods to improve wildlife forensics and enhance the investigation and prosecution of wildlife crime. With many illegal wildlife goods being trafficked by sea, a new partnership with the United Nations Development Program to reduce maritime trafficking of wildlife is introducing new tools such as the 'Risk Profiler' which effectively profiles thousands of containers in a matter of minutes and detect suspicious cargo that is likely to contain wildlife and other contraband.

A remote air sampling technology to detect target odor from containers using scent detection rats is also being piloted. Under a regional partnership with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the Trade in Wildlife Information eXchange database is being rolled out in East Africa to enhance opportunities for information sharing on wildlife crime among law enforcement officers in the region. In addition, an innovative wildlife data application — called “WILD” — that allows government agencies and community rangers to collect, analyze and share real-time data on human-wildlife conflict and poaching, has been rolled out in 15 community conservancies around the Maasai Mara reserve, making protection efforts more effective.

DEMAND REDUCTION

East Africa recognizes a large demand for commercial bushmeat for both meat and medicine. Under the IUCN-CONNECT project, The Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network (TRAFFIC) is conducting research and monitoring in Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya, in collaboration with national wildlife authorities, to better understand the extent of bushmeat consumption in the region and develop behavior change communication strategies to help reduce the demand for target species.

POLICY REFORM TO ENABLE CONSERVATION

In 2019, USAID launched a new regional program with the East African Community (EAC), together with IUCN, World Wildlife Fund, and TRAFFIC, to support conservation and management of East Africa’s natural resources. A strong focus is on supporting the coordination and implementation of the EAC Strategy to Combat Poaching, Illegal Trade and Trafficking of Wildlife and Wildlife Products.

USAID also supported the development of the National Wildlife Strategy 2030 which acts as a roadmap for long-term engagement between the Government of Kenya, Kenya Wildlife Service, USAID, and other development partners on priority actions for wildlife conservation in Kenya. USAID also works with TNC in partnership with the Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association to support national-level policy analysis to strengthen the legislative framework for community conservation in Kenya.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS

USAID is building a strong coalition of governmental and intergovernmental agencies to address the transnational threat of wildlife crime. USAID has partnered with the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) on a seven-year project that utilizes DOI’s expertise in law enforcement, investigation, and prosecution to create a strong network of regional actors to combat wildlife trafficking throughout East Africa. USAID is also working in partnership with KWS to scale up counter wildlife trafficking efforts in Kenya that will closely align with Kenya’s national priorities and USAID’s new Country Development Cooperation Strategy 2020-2025. In the East Africa region, USAID is supporting a global GEF-financed, World Bank-led Global Wildlife Program which brings together a wide range of partners, including the governments of 32 participating countries across Africa, Asia, and Latin America, GEF agencies, bilateral and multilateral donors, foundations, the private sector, and civil society.

Budget: \$30 million

Key Government Partners:

Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, and Regional Development Authorities:

Kenya Wildlife Service
National Museums of Kenya
East African Community

Key Implementing Partners:

USAID Uganda and Tanzania
U.S. Department of the Interior
United Nations Development Program
International Union for Conservation of Nature/World Wildlife Fund/TRAFFIC
The Nature Conservancy
Northern Rangelands Trust
Maasai Mara Wildlife Conservancies Association
Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association

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